

09/02/2016

The Honorable Lee Chatfield  
Chair House Local Government Committee  
Anderson House Office Building  
Post Office Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Chairman Chatfield:

My name is Dayna DeMeester and I am an Oakland County Sheriff's Deputy. I have owned Pitbull, and Pitbull mixes my entire life, without any breed restriction or safety issues. Throughout my personal life and professional career, I have come to learn it is not just about the breed that plays into factors of owning a dog. It is based on care, training and responsibility of the individual owner. Any dog can be potentially dangerous and issues should be handled on a case by case basis, not an overall breed ban.

I am writing to ask for your support of Senate Bill 239 by voting for the bill in the House Local Government Committee, on the House floor, and by encouraging your colleagues to do the same. The bill has already passed the Senate with overwhelming, bipartisan vote. It is our understanding that a hearing on the bill is scheduled for September 7, 2016 before your committee.

SB 239 would prohibit local units of government from arbitrarily creating ordinances that infringe upon personal property rights – more specifically, what breed of dog an individual can own.

Opponents will also tell you that Senate Bill 239 eliminates local control. The truth is that local units of government have, and should, work to pass ordinances that hold the owner of any pet responsible for the conduct of that pet – *regardless of breed*. Further, breed specific ordinances require local units of government, already strapped for money, to dedicate resources to enforcement. This is unnecessarily onerous and is undoubtedly ineffective.

Finally, especially in more urban areas, a law-abiding citizen walking a well-trained dog could inadvertently cross one local unit boundary and enter another – unknowingly commit a crime, be fined, and have their dog seized or worse.

Simply put – breed specific ordinances at the local level are ineffective, costly, and distract from where true attention and resources should be focused, on the enforcement of laws and ordinances that hold pet owners accountable for the pet's behavior – regardless of breed.

Thank you, and again – please support SB 239.

Sincerely,  
Dayna DeMeester

